THANOS®

MARVEL

#8

LEMIRE
PERALTA
ROSENBERG

A total obsession with power drives him--to control the forces of the universe.
He is the Mad Titan. He is. . .

THANOS

For a time, Thanos was stricken with a terminal illness. His son Thane recruited Nebula, Tryco Slatterus, and Thanos' brother Starfox to take advantage of Thanos' weakened state and kill him. But under the guidance of Death--Thanos' former love--Thane betrayed his allies and harnessed the dread Phoenix Force. On Titan, Thane unleashed his power on Thanos and left him to die a powerless mortal.

But Thanos would not go gently, and was still alive when Starfox, Nebula, and Tryco came looking for the one man who would know how to defeat Thane.

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THE SMALL PLANET OF FLIVOK-6 WAS THE LAST HOLDOUT IN THE BLACK QUADRANT, THE DOMAIN OF THANOS AND HIS ARMY OF MERCENARIES, SOLDIERS, AND WARMONGERS.

THOUGH IT WAS SMALL IN SIZE, THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLE OF FLIVOK-6 WERE A WARLIKE RACE AND THE PLANET WAS HOME TO ONE OF THE **LARGEST STANDING ARMIES** IN THIS PART OF THE GALAXY.

IN THANOS' ABSENCE, **CORVUS GLAIVE** TOOK CONTROL OF THE BLACK QUADRANT AND HELD OFF ON ATTACKING FLIVOK-6, FEARING HIS ARMY WOULD SUFFER HUGE LOSSES FOR LITTLE GAIN.

UPON RETURNING TO THE BLACK QUADRANT, THANOS INTENDED TO TAKE ACTION WHERE CORVUS HAD HESISTATED. BUT, AS WE KNOW, THANOS IS NO LONGER IN ANY POSITION, OR **CONDITION**, TO ATTACK **ANYTHING**.

FLIVOK-6 LOOKED LIKE IT WOULD BE SPARED. THE PEOPLE WERE PREPARING TO CELEBRATE WITH A MILITARY PARADE.

I SAY "THEY WERE" BECAUSE THE PEOPLE OF FLIVOK-6 NO LONGER **ARE**.

YESTERDAY HE CAME TO FLIVOK-6.

DESPITE THEIR MASSIVE ARMY, THERE WAS NO WAY OF DEFENDING THEMSELVES FROM HIS NEWFOUND PHOENIX POWERS.

THE HALF-BREED. THE BASTARD SON. THE DESTROYER OF WORLDS.

THANE, SON OF THANOS, CAME...

...AND FLIVOK-6 WAS NO MORE.

HRRM... WHY ARE YOU TELLING ME THIS, EROS?

I AM TELLING YOU THIS, *BROTHER*, BECAUSE WE NEED YOUR HELP TO *KILL YOUR SON.*

THIS IS #$^@. THERE'S ONLY ONE REASON I AGREED TO COME HERE WITH YOU, STARFOX--

--AND THAT'S TO *KILL THIS OLD BASTARD* WHILE WE HAVE THE CHANCE!

EASY, GIRL! THIS IS NOT THE TIME!

DON'T YOU EVER PUT YOUR HANDS ON ME AGAIN, TRYCO SLATTERUS!

UNGH!

OW.

NOW, NOW, NEBULA. YOU *DON'T* WANT TO DO THAT.

I--I DON'T?

NO, YOU DON'T. IN FACT YOU'RE NO LONGER ANGRY AT ALL, ARE YOU?

NO. NO, I'M NOT.

DO NOT FALL FOR STARFOX'S TRICKERY, NEBULA. HE IS USING HIS POWER TO *MANIPULATE* YOU.

YOU USE YOUR POWER ON ME AGAIN, STARFOX, AND I WILL CUT YOUR TAIL OFF.

AND WHAT OF YOU, THANOS? HAVE YOU A DEATH WISH? SHOULD I HAVE LET HER KILL YOU? EVEN IF SHE DOESN'T, THAT INFECTED ARM LOOKS AS THOUGH IT IS SET TO DO THE JOB ANYWAY.

THANE SAID YOU WERE ILL. THAT YOU WERE DYING. BUT I NEVER EXPECTED TO SEE YOU LOOKING SO...SO...

MORTAL?

THAT'S ONE WORD FOR IT. YES.

MY SON IS IN LEAGUE WITH THE LADY DEATH HERSELF. I BELIEVE IT WAS SHE WHO CAUSED MY ILLNESS AND LED HIM TO CAPTURE THE PHOENIX FORCE.

HE TRICKED US, TOO. I--I BELIEVED THE BOY WHEN HE SAID HE ONLY WANTED TO KILL YOU, THANOS. BUT HE HAD HIS SIGHTS ON THAT DAMNED PHOENIX EGG ALL ALONG.

TRYCO SLATTERUS DOES NOT LIKE TO BE TAKEN FOR A FOOL. AND STARFOX SAYS YOU MAY BE OUR ONLY HOPE IN STOPPING HIM, SO...SO HELP ME, HERE I AM.

YES, WELL, WHEN I SAID HE COULD HELP US, TRYCO, I DIDN'T REALIZE WE WOULD FIND HIM LIVING AS A *SPACE HOBO.*

YOU WANTED MY POWER TO DISPOSE OF THANE, BROTHER? LET ME ASK YOU, IF I *STILL HAD* MY POWER, WHAT WOULD HAVE STOPPED ME FROM KILLING THE THREE OF YOU AS WELL?

BROTHERLY LOVE?

HRRM...

OH, TO BE HONEST, THANOS, I DIDN'T THINK THAT FAR AHEAD. THESE ARE *DESPERATE TIMES* AND THANE IS *JUST GETTING STARTED.*

HE IS SIMPLY CHAOTIC--LASHING OUT, DESTROYING *EVERYTHING* IN SIGHT.

EVEN NOW THE FORCES OF THE SHI'AR EMPIRE ARE BANDING TOGETHER WITH SPARTAX TO MOUNT AN ASSAULT, BUT THEY ARE DOOMED TO FAIL.

THANE NOW HAS THE *POWER OF A GOD.* AND IT WILL *TAKE* THE POWER OF A GOD TO STOP HIM.

SO YOU ALL ALLIED WITH MY SON IN A CLANDESTINE ATTEMPT TO *ASSASSINATE ME,* AND NOW YOU WANT TO *SWITCH SIDES,* EH?

PRETTY MUCH.

YUP.

THIS WAS A WASTE OF TIME. HE HAS LOST ALL OF HIS POWER.

WHAT IS LOST CAN OFTEN BE *FOUND AGAIN,* TRYCO SLATTERUS.

I HAVE HAD MUCH TIME TO THINK ABOUT MY CURRENT PREDICAMENT, EROS. AND MUCH TIME TO THINK ABOUT WHAT I WOULD DO AND WHERE I WOULD GO IF I EVER GOT OFF TITAN.

WHAT'S BREWING IN THAT BIG EVIL BRAIN OF YOURS, THANOS? A PLAN?

I WILL FIND THE COSMIC COVEN. THE THREE THAT ARE ONE.

THE WITCHES OF INFINITY.

THE WITCHES? YOU REALLY ARE MAD! THEY--THEY ARE JUST A MYTH, SURELY.

THEY ARE NO MYTH. WHEN I POSSESSED THE INFINITY GEMS I COULD SENSE THEM OUT THERE AT THE EDGES OF THE UNIVERSE.

THE COSMIC COVEN IS *VERY REAL.* AND THEY ARE SAID TO BE THE GATEKEEPERS OF THE GODS.

BUT IF THEY *ARE* REAL, THEN SO ARE THE STORIES. TO STRIKE A DEAL WITH THE WITCHES OF INFINITY WILL COST YOU YOUR *VERY SOUL.*

I LOST MY SOUL *LONG AGO,* BROTHER.

WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

YOU HEARD ME, SLATTERUS. I MUST GO TO THE *VERY EDGE* OF THE UNIVERSE. AND *YOU THREE* ARE GOING TO TAKE ME THERE.

THIS IS MY SHIP! I SAY WHERE WE GO.

VERY WELL, THEN YOU DECIDE, NEBULA.

EITHER YOU LEAVE ME HERE TO DIE, AND THEN *THE REST OF THE UNIVERSE* FOLLOWS ME SHORTLY AFTERWARD AS MY SON DOES LADY DEATH'S BIDDING POWERED BY THE PHOENIX FORCE...

...OR YOU FIX MY ARM AND PILOT US TO FIND THE COSMIC COVEN SO THAT I CAN REGAIN MY POWER AND HELP YOU WIPE THANE'S UNGRATEFUL, INSIGNIFICANT *LIFE* FROM THE UNIVERSE FOREVER.

...

KHOOM

AND SO AN UNLIKELY ALLIANCE IS BORN AS THANOS AND HIS WOULD-BE ASSASSINS JOIN TOGETHER AND SET OFF TOWARD THE FRINGES OF THE UNIVERSE.

BUT JUST THEN, MUCH CLOSER TO TITAN...

...ANOTHER ALLIANCE, MADE OF WAR FLEETS FROM BOTH THE SHI'AR EMPIRE AND SPARTAX, DESCENDS ON THE BLACK QUADRANT.

THEY ARE COMING FOR YOU, MY LOVE.

I KNOW. AND THEY WILL KEEP COMING UNTIL I AM DEAD.

THAT WILL *NOT* HAPPEN. *NO ONE* CAN KILL YOU NOW, THANE.

WHAT IS IT? THIS IS WHAT YOU WANTED. POWER.

I KNOW. BUT I CAN'T HELP FEELING THAT THIS ISN'T RIGHT.

YOU ARE A GOD NOW, THANE. YOU NEVER HAVE TO FEEL GUILT AGAIN. YOU NEVER HAVE TO FEEL *SMALL* AGAIN.

IT'S NOT GUILT I FEEL. JUST THAT--THAT EVEN *THIS POWER* IS NOT ENOUGH, SOMEHOW.

YOUR FATHER. WHAT YOU FEEL IS UNFINISHED BUSINESS.

YES. STRIPPING HIS POWER AND CASTING HIM AWAY...IT'S NOT ENOUGH. I KNOW HE IS SUFFERING, BUT I WILL NEVER FEEL FULLY IN CONTROL AS LONG AS HE IS *STILL ALIVE* OUT THERE.

THEN WE WILL GO TO TITAN AND YOU WILL END HIM. ONCE AND FOR ALL.

BUT FIRST...

...THEY COME. WILL YOU *DELIVER THEM TO ME,* MY LOVE?

OF COURSE.

THEIR LIVES ARE *YOURS,* MY LADY DEATH.

AND SO THANE **KILLS** IN THE NAME OF HIS LOVE.

BUT HE DOES NOT FEEL SOLACE. HIS WHOLE LIFE, THANE HAS WANTED NOTHING MORE THAN TO BELONG, TO BE SOMEONE...TO BE ACCEPTED.

AND NO MATTER HOW POWERFUL HE BECOMES, DEEP INSIDE HE WILL ALWAYS BE THAT HURT, LOST, UNWANTED LITTLE BOY.

HE THINKS HE HAS FINALLY FOUND HIS PLACE WITH LADY DEATH. HE IS FINALLY SOMEONE WHO CAN NO LONGER BE IGNORED.

BUT THE MORE HE USES THE PHOENIX FORCE, THE MORE HIS POWER **RAGES**, THE EMPTIER HE FEELS...

...AND THE STRONGER HER **CONTROL** OVER HIM BECOMES.

HOURS LATER, AFTER THE LAST OF THE WAR FLEET HAS BEEN DISMANTLED AND DESTROYED BY THANE, AND HE LAY IN DEATH'S ARMS, NEBULA'S SHIP FINDS ITSELF RACING AT FASTER-THAN-LIGHT SPEEDS TOWARD THE FARTHEST REACHES OF SPACE.

WE ARE PASSING THROUGH UNCHARTED SPACE, THANOS. HOW CAN YOU BE SURE THESE ARE THE CORRECT COORDINATES?

I TOLD YOU, SLATTERUS, WHEN I POSSESSED THE INFINITY GEMS, MY CONSCIOUSNESS WAS ALL-KNOWING.

I SENSED THE WITCHES OUT HERE IN THE BLACKEST PARTS OF SPACE, SIX ALL-KNOWING EYES, *STARING BACK* AT ME.

I STILL THINK THIS IS A WILD GOOSE CHASE. HOW WILL THEY HELP US?

IF THE FABLES ARE TRUE, THE WITCHES ARE SAID TO BE OLDER THAN ANY GODS...

"...AND WHEN THE POWER OF A GOD FADES, WHEN THE CULTURES AND CIVILIZATIONS THAT WORSHIP THEM ARE DESTROYED OR EVOLVE BEYOND THEM, IT IS THE ENCHANTRESSES OF ETERNITY WHO COLLECT THESE OLD GODS...

"IT IS SAID THEY *FEED* ON THEIR SOULS AND DISPERSE THEIR POWER BACK INTO THE COSMOS."

LOVELY. AND WHAT HAPPENS IF WE COME ALL THIS WAY AND FIND THEY *REALLY ARE* JUST A MYTH, STARFOX?

NOW, WHAT REASON COULD I POSSIBLY HAVE FOR DOUBTING MY DEAR BROTHER?

IT IS EXACTLY THAT SORT OF GLIB ATTITUDE THAT HAS ALWAYS MADE ME WANT TO RIP YOUR HEAD FROM YOUR SHOULDERS, EROS.

AH, NO, DON'T GO GETTING SENTIMENTAL ON ME, THANOS.

#$^@! I KNEW FLYING FASTER THAN LIGHT INTO UNCHARTED SPACE WAS A MISTAKE! I'M PULLING US OUT OF LIGHT SPEED.

WHAT IS IT?

A BLACK HOLE!

EXCELLENT. WE ARE HERE.

WHAT?! *THIS* IS WHERE YOU THINK THE WITCHES ARE?

NO, EROS. THIS IS WHERE I *KNOW* THEY ARE.

I WILL GO INTO THE BLACK HOLE. YOU THREE STAY HERE AND AWAIT MY RETURN, OR LEAVE IF YOU WISH. IT MATTERS NOT TO ME.

IF THEY REALLY ARE IN THERE, AND THEY CONTROL ALL THAT POWER, YOU *CANNOT BE TRUSTED* WITH IT ALONE.

SO NOBLE, BROTHER. I SEE YOU ARE REDISCOVERING YOUR HEROIC ROOTS.

PATHETIC.

YOU TWO ARE BOTH INSANE.

PROBABLY, TRYCO. PROBABLY.

I CAN'T GO ANY CLOSER WITHOUT THE SHIP BEING PULLED IN, TOO.

YOU AND TRYCO NEED TO STAY HERE. IF WE DON'T COME BACK, OR YOU LOSE CONTACT WITH US, GET AS FAR AWAY FROM HERE AND FROM THANE AS YOU CAN.

NO ARGUMENTS HERE.

TRYCO SLATTERUS WAS RIGHT, THIS WHOLE PLAN IS RATHER INSANE, IS IT NOT?

PERHAPS THE MONIKER "THE MAD TITAN" IS MORE FITTING NOW THAN EVER.

AS THEY DRIFT TOWARD THE EVENT HORIZON, THANNNNOOOSSSS AAAAAANNND STAAAAAAAAARRRRFOOOOOOOOXXXXX--

WAAAAAIT. SOOOOMETHIIIIIIING ISSSSSSS WROOOOOOOOONG...

VEEEERRRRY WROOOOOOOOOOOONGGGG--

.TEMLEH SIH NI STIMOV XOFRATS EMIT DNA ECAPS HGUORHT DELLUP ERA YEHT SA

.KCALB FO NAECO NA SI YKS EHT EREHW MLAER NWONKNU DNA EGNARTS A NI SEVLESMEHT DNIF YEHT DNA .SDNE TI NAGEB TI SA YLNEDDUS SA NEHT

¡GASP!¿

HRRM...

WELL, WELL, WHAT HAVE WE HERE? TWO *BROTHERS* COME TO SEE THE *THREE SISTERS*, EH?

WELCOME TO THE END OF ALL THINGS, SONS OF TITAN.

WELCOME TO THE INVERTED WORLD.

WELCOME TO THE GOD QUARRY.

TO BE CONTINUED!

THANOS

THE GOD QUARRY! Is that the name of your progressive metal band? Maybe it should be? I'd buy that last page as a white-on-black T-shirt for sure. Thanks so much for all the letters you've been sending! It's heartening to see some love for the cosmic corner of the MU. There's a lot of good stuff over here--right? Why don't I let you tell us about it.

Dear Thanos Crew:

I don't really know what to say--as soon as I finished reading issue #1 I knew that this series would be something special. Personally, I was fully introduced to Thanos in 2013 with THANOS RISING. Thanos is a character that solidifies my life and I'm even legally changing my middle name to Thanos sometime soon. I hope to continue to see more character development, especially between Thane and Mistress Death. I especially loved seeing Pip the Troll appear in issue #3. Jeff Lemire and Mike Deodato really have made a series that is up there with THANOS QUEST and THE INFINITY GAUNTLET. Let's hope the Mad Titan can put an end to what is killing him and survive. I'll forever be grateful for this story that is unfolding.

Ray "Thanos" Garcia
Saint Cloud, FL

Ray "Thanos" Garcia?! That's AMAZING! It speaks to the power of this character that you could discover him relatively recently and feel such an affinity. You're not the first to mention appreciating Pip's appearance--maybe it's time for a spin-off? Thanosthusiasts, tweet at Jordan D. White if you want to see a Pip the Troll solo title, creative team TBD!!! (This is a joke please don't do that he is my boss and it wouldn't help anyway.)

Man, I gotta say this is the most solid cosmic series since THANOS QUEST! As much as I love the MU as a whole, it's always refreshing when more obscure characters get the spotlight. Heck, they're often more compelling because we haven't seen them in almost every situation imaginable! So thank you, Jeff Lemire and the editorial staff for taking a risk on hidden gems like Starfox and Champion! And speaking of "champions"... Mike Deodato is fast becoming one of my favorites. It's been amazing to see his growth as an artist over the years and, like the great Ron Garney, he just gets better and more versatile. As irritating as I usually find the use of digital art/coloring in comics, I have to say that the team of Deodato and Martin is killing it!

Make Mine Moondragon!

Gratefully Yours,
Johann Hauser

****

I love this series--it's by far my favorite. It just goes to show how cool the entire cosmic roster is. Terrax was cool to see in a non-lackey light. Also, after 40 years, EROS FIRES A BLAST FROM HIS HANDS! I always wondered why he was portrayed so weak when every one of his relatives were tough. The only thing that could make this series perfect is the return of Mar-Vell!

Donald J.

Yes! The cosmic roster is wide and deep. Part of the fun of working on these books is rediscovering the strange entanglements these characters have and seeing what new creators can make of them. (Speaking of Moondragon, I'm waiting for someone to take another look at her relationship with Drax.) I hope you two enjoyed all the Eros and Thanos interactions in this issue!

Hello, Thanos,

This truly has been a long time coming, eh, Thanos? Even gods as powerful as you--the one known as the Mad Titan--even their reigns must come to an end. When I first discovered your sickness, I didn't know what to feel; at first I felt joy that a bringer of destruction such as yourself would finally have your life ended. Then, I felt sadness that it will be sickness that will finally bring you to your knees and not one of your super powerful victims. Finally, I have come to the emotion that I have decided to settle on--envy. I am "super" envious of you, Thanos, not of your vast power, oh Masterlord, not of your title--Mad Titan--but of something more material. Thanos, your chair is excellent, and you've sat in it so long I could make a killing by selling it on the intergalactic black market. Can I have your chair?

The one who would have Thanos' chair must EARN it, and to earn it, they must TAKE it. Or they must BUILD a pretty convincing replica with household items like DRIED ELBOW PASTA!

THANOS is hands-down the best ongoing series at Marvel right now! It's hard to get into certain Marvel comics today because of the unrecognizable characters and stories, but that is not the case with THANOS. THANOS is a beautifully told story with an outstanding creative team. With THANOS, you can look forward to each issue, knowing there will be fantastic artwork and phenomenal writing.

Daniel K.

****

Hello Kathleen,

Where do I begin? I suppose the beginning is the best place to start. I've been a longtime Thanos fan by now. As strange as this may seem, I'm actually a DC fan first and foremost, yet Thanos has always been my favorite Marvel character. In fact, whether it be print or digital, I actually own every Thanos story ever printed. True story. (There may be a cameo here or there he made in some issues that escaped me, but overall I have tons of Thanos in my life.) I also own a number of collectibles, figures, and statues of Thanos. What can I say? Something about the guy speaks to me...

Being something of a Thanos historian, I get the distinct feeling we are witnessing a transition or rebirth for the Mad Titan in this series. His decision to kill Corvus Glaive in issue #1; killing his father Mentor in issue #3; the progression of his unknown disease; and now his son, Thane, taking a larger role in expediting affairs. Something big is happening here, I just don't know what. Yet. By the way, my compliments on the Phoenix Force idea. Didn't see that coming!

It doesn't surprise me that Thanos is evolving once again, because as I look back at his overall history, change has been the character's only constant. He's been an intergalactic terrorist; a brilliant, albeit mad scientist; a loudmouth braggart; God incarnate; a farmer; even a reluctant ally to the good guys. Personally, I've always felt the character has been too shortsighted in his methods by always opting to destroy potentially valuable assets instead of keeping them around and ultimately using them to his advantage, as a true god would do in those situations. Perhaps this facet too is just another expression of his timeless fatal flaw: the subconscious desire for failure, and ultimately death. Speaking of which, I've so far been very surprised to see that he's so desperate for a cure for his current mystery illness. Perhaps this is the transition I mentioned earlier? Is Thanos now ready to act as a true god would in this predicament--to perceive opportunity where others would only see demise?

I can't say. Though I have the feeling the Mad Titan isn't going to let someone as foolish as his son Thane be his executioner since he hasn't proven himself capable of carrying on the family legacy yet. Hats off to Mike Deodato's art, by the way. The guy just crushes it month in, month out (even if I do think Thanos looks a little too thick, blocky, and impractical in a few panels here or there). Regardless of any design nitpicks I may have, Mike's storytelling prowess is still among the best in the biz. Keep up the good work, folks. Wherever this story goes from here, rest assured I'll always be a loyal follower of Thanos of Titan, and will always be willing to follow him into what comes next.

Britton Thompson
Birmingham, AL

Thanos is lucky to have you as a follower, Britton, and so are we! Watch out, though--as poor Corvus learned, that's not enough to keep you safe. That's an interesting interpretation of Thanos' motivation--that at his core, he's seeking failure and death. But don't you think he would insist that it be on his own terms?

Hello, guys!

Thanos is my favorite character so I am glad that there is such an awesome comic on the market just for him! I wanted to suggest a name for the letters page, such as "Letters for a Titan" or "Titan Trap."

Keep up the good work,
Giannis Alexiadis
Greece

****

Hi,

My name is David Calvo and I have a few suggestions for the letters page title. How about "Dying to Send" or "Infinite Wisdom," or even "Deadly Conversations"? Just a few options you may like!

What if we say that the name of this letter column is so macabre and dark that it must never be spoken or printed? You guys have too many good suggestions, and I don't want to pick.

But I'll get it nailed down for next time! So don't miss that! Hmm? The story? Oh, yeah, you might want to find out what happens to Thanos and Eros when confronting the Witches of Infinity! Plus, can Nebula and Tryco just hang out, parked on the edge of a black hole for long? Will they play car games to pass the time???

See you then!

Kathleen

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ZONE